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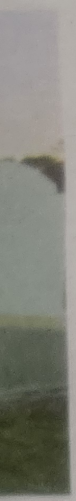
giveaways



and 5.30pm only. FIVE runners up will receive a copy of the soundtrack, and for a chance to win the CD, answer this: In what year did Bon Scott die? Entries to Thunderstruck CD giveaway, c/o Drum Media, PO Box 698, Darlinghurst 1300, by Friday 21 May.

Winners are grinners

You can't have missed them on the cover, and if you turn the pages a bit more you'll find out all of what's happening in the world of **The Vines**. To coincide with the release of their new album *Winning Days*, and the fact they have a sold out gig at The Metro on Friday 28 May, there is ONE cool Vines pack to give away. It contains a copy of *Winning Days* on vinyl, their single *Ride*, a T shirt, badges and patch. THREE runners up will receive a copy of the *Winning Days* CD. To win, answer this: Who handles vocal duties in The Vines? Entries to The Vines giveaway, c/o Drum Media, PO Box 698, Darlinghurst 1300, by Friday 21 May.

Look into the mirror

With their track *Mirror Mirror* being played on the radio and pay TV across the country, **After The Fall** hit the road in May to promote it. This sees them play the Annandale Hotel on Friday 14 May. Also on the bill is **The Stockholm Syndrome** who will be launching their new EP and opening the night will be **Sans Chavelle**. To win one of THREE double passes to the gig, be one of the first to email the band via the website www.afterthefall.com.au and say what the first After The Fall EP was called.

Bob Marley's biographer and world renowned expert on reggae music, America's **Roger Steffens** will tour Australia. *Catch A Fire: The life of Bob Marley* is a two hour presentation of rare footage, interviews and previously unreleased versions of popular songs. Steffens will also launch the Australian release of his

World. The album shot straight to number one in the Australian charts of its release. If you want to be a part of D12's World by winning one of FOUR copies of the album, answer this: Who form the rest of D12 along with Eminem? Entries to D12 giveaway, c/o Drum Media, PO

The Vines bassplayer Patrick Matthews calls them "another inspired comedy moment." Others describe them as yet more "dramas" in the world of The Vines. Like the time at the Wiltern Theatre in Los Angeles a few weeks ago, when Crag Nicholls was so apologetic about the sound problems that plagued their set that he gave his guitar to an audience member. An expensive act of penitence, surely?

"CRAIG DOESN'T EXPLAIN HIS SONGS TO US..."

THE VINES story by **CHRISTIE ELIEZER**

"Well, is there a difference between smashing a guitar and giving it away?" shrugs the bassist. He is, it must be remembered, in the only rock band in the world to smash up their gear (and the set) during the soundcheck to the Jay Leno Show rather than at least wait until they were on air in front of millions of viewers.

Matthews can't comment on Nicholls' antics at the Wiltern, he'd already left the stage by then. He exudes the air of someone who's learned to ignore the constant chaos that seemingly whirls around The Vines. But he remembers more about the time in New York when a tired and emotional Courtney Love arrived and demanded to go onstage with the band. "She probably wanted Jet more than us, she turned up just before they went on," he offers. "Our collective tour managers told her it wasn't a good idea. I think she wanted to get into the dressing room. Normal people don't ask (to go onstage), they wait to be asked. Courtney Love is not normal..." So The Vines aren't up for getting people up to jam? "Some people get up and do a guitar solo because they're good at playing guitar. Or a tambourine or keyboards or whatever. (pause) The problem with our band is, if we gave the guitar solo in a song to someone else, we wouldn't know what to do with ourselves!"

Matthews was in Munich, chilling out before a show that night at a 2,000 capacity club. A day or two before, they did a TV show in Spain. "It turned into a festival of guitar throwing. We had to mime the song. Craig was throwing his guitar at this audience of teenage girls. It was quite amusing." The bassist allows himself a hearty, if tired, chuckle. There are no chuckles however when we talk about the response to The Vines' second album Winning Days. Critics and fans are bitterly divided about whether it's a piece of crap or a step forward from their debut Highly Evolved.

Mind you, people were never sure how to take Highly Evolved either. It appeared just as the march of the Guitar Brigade began, and led to The Vines being hailed as torchbearers alongside The Strokes and The Hives. Was it all hype? Were they a band with just one decent hit single? Or was the music a fascinating look into the mind of someone whose chandelier was short a few bulbs?

Winning Days is even more polarising. Certainly on first listen, it sounds tired and disinterested. But a number of spins, however, suggests they're making it on their own terms. Nicholls lives on his own planet, and it's where these songs come from. They range from the guitar attack of *Ride* and *She's Got Something To Say To Me* to tripped out acoustic strums *(Rainfall, Autumn Shade 2)* to the ethereal Floydian slips of the remarkable *Amnesia*.

"IS THERE A DIFFERENCE BETWEEN SMASHING A GUITAR AND GIVING IT AWAY?"

The single *Ride* is a great radio song, its chorus comes at you with a rush. It could well be a love song to The Vines' fans. Is it? "I don't know if there's any meaning aside from the feeling of motion. It wasn't written for anyone in particular, but it could be partly." *FTW* or *Fuck The World* is not some foul-mouthed rant but has its intellectual basis on society's increasing relying on technology. Matthews isn't sure. "Craig doesn't always explain his songs to us. He might say, Well, this is my environmental song' but no more." The album cover of Winnings Days is a tribute to the Beatles' Revolver. It also takes its spirit, being equally as eclectic, and experimenting with studio possibilities. Matthews is terrified of making any kind of "we're like the Beatles" statement in case outraged people piss on him from a great height. But he observes that many ballads on Winning Days have the same simplicity.

"We wanted to avoid the Richard Ashcroft approach of giving each song an epic treatment, at least I wanted to," Matthews says. "The complexity of the record lies in the two-part and three-part harmonies, not whether to get in a violin player or a whole orchestra. A few bits actually got cut out of some songs to make them lean."

What was The Vines' mental state when they arrived at Bearsville Studios in upstate New York to start recording? "We were excited. We'd just come off tour, but we weren't tired. We were really tired at the end of 2002. It wasn't so bad in 2003."

How was the band that made Winning Days different from the one which made that first album? "Things change in your life but you don't notice them unless you keep a diary. We might have been more naive on the first album, at least in how to operate in the studio. We took four months to make this record, but that was more about how (producer) Rob (Schnapf) goes about making a record. We could easily record 10 songs in 12 days."

Parts of Winning Days sound like a burden was being lifted, as if they were pissing against expectations. Was that the case? "It's hard to tell".

From an outsider's perspective, we had two singles which were quite aggressive. Half this record is slow. We've been getting a lot of negative press about how much this sounds like the first one. I didn't think it was. But after doing all these interviews, I don't know what to think any more. Some say it's the same, some say it's different. It got canned in the UK, saying it was terrible (sniggers). And the mags that praised it in America are not highbrow!" (even more sniggers).

Is he concerned that The Vines' image is primarily based around Nicholls' space cowboy antics? "I don't mind if it's the media, they write what they write.

I'm not a big fan of how big Craig's head is on the album cover! We're not singer and backing band. The band doesn't go out of its way to perpetuate that image, it's already out there as it is. And I certainly wouldn't like it if the record company pushed it."

After taking up jogging for health reasons, how else does Patrick combat the drudgery of the road? He mishears. "Did you say druggery? Oh, drudgery. Druggery is an interesting choice of words. I stopped jogging because we went back on tour. I'm starting again when we get to Australia."

Was he good at sports at school? "I played Aussie Rules football on the weekends. I wasn't the first one to be picked but I was OK."

Has he found any long lost relations when The Vines played around the world? "No, but it's weird when you see someone you went to school with. You haven't seen them for 10 years, and it takes 10 seconds to recognise them."

After the Oz dates, The Vines' return to America and tour with Incubus. But what would he do if The Vines decided to stop for a six-month holiday tomorrow? "Drive around Australia, I've been meaning to do that before I get too old."

The Vines play at The Metro on Friday May 28. Winning Days is out thru EMI Music.